

Cherokee Club (El Pasaje)
1318 Ninth Avenue
Ybor City (Tampa)
Hillsborough County
Florida

HABS No. FL-271

HABS
FLA
29-TAMP,
9-

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

CHEROKEE CLUB
(El Pasaje Hotel, Arcade)

HABS No. FL-271

Location: 1318 Ninth Avenue, Ybor City, Tampa, Hillsborough County, Florida.

Present Owner: Jose Luis Avellanal - Jimenez.

Present Use: Low cost rental hotel.

Significance: The Cherokee Club was the second large brick building constructed in Ybor City. Its arched passageways served as a model for future buildings constructed in Ybor City. The building was the location of an exclusive men's club founded in 1895, and it served as the social center for the elite during and after the turn of the century.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: The club was constructed from 1895 to 1896. It opened on March 25, 1896.
2. Architect: Initial sketches of the building were by Architect A. H. Parslow and finished by Architect Browning. Construction of the building was supervised by M. J. Miller, a well-known architect.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The building is located in the Ybor City subdivision, Block 31, lots 6 through 10. The title records for this building, supplied by Chelsea Title and Guaranty Company, Tampa, Florida, are as follows:

1886

Deed recorded December 1, 1886, filed February 24, 1887
Book W, page 572
C. W. Wells and wife
to
Vincent Martinez Ybor, lots 6,7,8

1886

Deed recorded December 1, 1886, filed February 24, 1887
Book W, page 572
C. W. Wells and wife
to
Vincent Martinez Ybor and wife

1887

Deed recorded January 25, 1887, filed June 18, 1887
Book X, page 64
Vincent Martinez Ybor and wife
to
Ybor City Land and Improvement Company

1906

Deed recorded May 1, 1906, filed December 13, 1906
Book 70, page 119
Ybor City Land and Development Company leased
to
Caudilo Alonzo and Lino Prida, (a firm of Prida Company,
restaurant, saloon and storeroom and kitchen on ground floor
with six rooms adjacent on the west and known as Flat #3, all
ground floor of brick building known as Arcade on N.W. corner of
9th Avenue and 14 Street).

1924

Deed recorded May 1, 1924, filed May 10, 1924 .
Book 431, page 136
Ybor City Land and Improvement Company
to
Jose Alvarez

1925

Deed recorded November 25, 1931, filed January 8, 1932
Book 924, page 324
Jose Alvarez
to
Benjamin Alvarez, half interest
(Foreclosure of mortgage resulted in the sale of the lots to
Jefferson Standard Life Insurance Company [a Corporation], while
the building was retained by the Alvarez Brothers).

1934

Deed recorded November 7, 1934, filed November 7, 1934
Book 995, page 166
J. B. Norman, Special Master
to
Jefferson Standard Life Insurance Company, a Corporation (for
\$15,000.00)

1935

Deed recorded December 16, 1932, filed May 2, 1935
Book 1007, page 23
Benjamin Alvarez
to
Jose Alvarez, Business interest

1937

Deed recorded August 2, 1937, filed August 3, 1937
Book 1063, page 54
Jose Alvarez sold out business interest
to
Jefferson Standard Life Insurance Company, a Corporation

1938

Deed recorded November 29, 1938, filed December 16, 1938
Book 1098, page 234
Jefferson Standard Life Insurance Company, a Corporation
to
Hillsborough Investment Company

1943

Deed recorded June 5, 1943, filed June 16, 1943
Book 1242, page 403
Hillsborough Investment Company
to
Federation of Pan American Club

1945

Deed recorded May 14, 1945, filed May 16, 1945
Book 1325, page 132
Pan American Federation, a non-profit Corporation
to
Concepcion Avellanal

1946

Deed recorded July 10, 1946, filed September 16, 1946
Book 1398, page 549
Pan American Federation, a non-profit Corporation
to
Concepcion Avellanal, a corrective warranty deed
(The property was willed to her son Jose Luis Avellanal,
present owner).

4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: Wood work and painting were done by Edenfield and Jetton. Brick work was done by Levick and Moore.
5. Original plans and construction: The ground floor as originally designed was allocated for public and private uses and included a public Bar Room, a public restaurant, two private flats and two private dining rooms. The ceilings of the bar and the restaurant were embossed metal. The bar was equipped with twelve tables and two counters, of which one was used for

oysters. It is said that during the early days of the club the restaurant was filled with vines and foliage plants. Adjoining the restaurant were the two private dining rooms. The two private flats each consisted of six rooms with tiled floors.

The second floor was reserved for private club use and consisted of the club dining room, the Reading Room, the Billiard Room, a private flat, and other rooms. The dining room is said to be the most decorative feature of the club. It was finished in the style of Italian Renaissance. Its ceiling had a "sky treatment in which a great oval space will be softened off into immeasurable distance, with a flock of wild birds flying through space. At each of the four corners of the ceiling will be small medallions, devoted to game pieces, and at each end of the large central panel will be inserted the club monogram with supporting figures in the Italian renaissance style, bordered by a characteristic scroll and the leaves of the Cherokee rose" (Tampa Morning Tribune, January 30, 1896). It was painted by New York artists Leon and Shapleigh. (The mural can no longer be seen today). Massive oak furniture was used. The chairs were upholstered in purple leather. The dining room later became known as the Grand Salon. Adjoining the dining room was a butler's pantry with a dumbwaiter, which could be hoisted down to the lower floor. There was also a coat room near the dining room. The Reading Room was decorated in the Empire style. It had lavishly decorated curtains and a fireplace with white tiles. The Billiard Room was decorated in the German Renaissance. A carpeting of fine woven fabric was installed in this room. Both the Reading and Billiard Rooms were furnished in oak. The private flat numbered eight rooms and was separated from the club proper by a heavy brick wall. It was said to be "elegant and spacious" (Tampa Morning Tribune, February 12, 1896). In keeping with the general decoration scheme of the club, they were furnished in oak and other light woods. The floors were "laid in the heaviest English body Brussels" (Tampa Morning Tribune, March 11, 1896). The bathrooms were decorated in marble and tiling. Other rooms included the director's office, a card room and a linen room.

The central staircase to the second floor was covered with fine carpeting, which was still in place at the time of this report.

It is known that a casino existed during the the early days of the club. Due to insufficient evidence it is not known where the casino was located. This room included a theater with a scenic drop curtain painted by Leon and Shapleigh.

It is also known that a certain number of rooms were embellished with murals painted by the same artists.

6. Alterations and additions: In 1925 an addition was added to the northeast section of the building and the public bar was subdivided by a partition. Th addition was of poor quality and included a barbershop. In the 1950s, at the request of the City of Tampa, original balconies on the ground floor were removed and portions of railings were re-installed in the front windows on the second floor. Later, the globe finials on the parapet and the rear balcony were also removed.

Several of the rooms in the rear of the building are being renovated to accommodate an artistic studio.

B. HISTORICAL CONTEXT:

The Cherokee Club, built by the Ybor Land and Improvement Company and opened March 25, 1896, was the most exclusive men's club in the city. This club was unique in that its members combine persons of Latin and American heritage. The object of the club was to promote social intercourse of its members. The popular pastimes in the club were relaxation, entertainment and gambling.

In 1924 Jose Alvarez bought the club and operated it as a restaurant and hotel called the El Pasaje. Although the club was closed during the prohibition, the restaurant and the bar were the center for many luxurious banquets. In 1934 Alvarez was forced into bankruptcy and in 1937 Alvarez sold the building to Jefferson Standard Life Insurance Company. In 1943 the Federation of Pan American Club bought the building. The Pan American Federation was a non-profit organization dedicated to promote and further the relationship and understanding between the United States and the Latin American nations. In 1945, after only two years of ownership of the building, the Pan American Federation sold the building to Concepcion Avellanal.

PART II ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The distinctive exterior features of the building are the arched arcade, the balcony and the stained glass windows. The most imposing interior feature was the second floor dining room. It had ornate fireplaces and painted murals, which have since disappeared.
2. Condition of Fabric: Poor. Structrually it is still sound but the interior is in poor shape.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: The two-story E-shaped building measures 142'-6" x 95'-9" and is 32' high. The south (front) elevation is twenty bays and the east elevation is eleven bays.

2. Foundations: Brick.
3. Walls: The south and east elevations have brick walls in running bond. The south elevation has an open arcade supported on 21 square columns of cut brick on granite base. Arches spring from granite Doric capitals. Each arch has a tension rod and a running label of projecting molded brick. First floor facade is recessed 11'-2" behind outside face of the columns. Doors and windows on the first floor are not evenly spaced with the columns; therefore, the first and second floor openings are not vertically aligned. A projecting brick band occurs at transom height between second floor windows. There is a running label of cut brick over the second floor windows. Above this are two brick bands separated by three brick courses. Above the top band and centered over each window are recessed panels with cast-iron vents. Above the recessed panels is one row of brick dentils and one course of corbeled bricks. The parapet begins above this with two courses of corbeled brick. The parapet is composed of 21 equally spaced brick pedestals. Originally, there were globe finials on alternating pedestals. Infilled between pedestals is a decorative brick wall with a flat brick corbeled cap.

The east elevation is similar except that the second floor wall is flush with the first floor wall and there is no arcade. The corner arch and the arch at the end of the original building are longer and flatter than the other arches. The brick columns are engaged with the first floor wall. The addition built in 1925 has engaged columns and arches of red concrete with simulated brick markings. The globe finials were not included on this addition.

The north wall is brick in running bond with sheet metal flashing at the top.

The west elevation wall is brick in running bond with header courses at every seventh course. It has stepped-down parapets with brick caps.

The wall around the courtyard is brick with a concrete cap.

4. Structural system, framing: Brick bearing walls with wood floor and roof members. Brick firewalls divide the building into four bays.
5. Balconies: A balcony extends 3'-0" out from under the second floor windows on the east and south elevations. The balcony is supported on wrought-iron scroll brackets. The baluster and rail of the balcony are made of iron pipe and standard pipe fittings and floor flanges. An ornamental grill infills between the balusters. This grill was made of flat metal stock twisted

and welded into a decorative design. The fan-shaped dividers separating the balcony into four sections on the south elevation have been removed and re-installed in a building in nearby Ybor City Mall. These fan dividers were formed from wrought-iron rods with cast-iron spearheads. Another balcony formerly extended along the rear wall into the courtyard. The location of its supports is still visible.

6. Chimneys: Three brick chimneys on the west elevation are engaged with the parapet and exterior wall. Brick chimneys from the fireplaces and kitchen pierce the roof. Apparently the chimney from one of the fireplaces in the Grand Salon has been removed. Each of the firewalls between the apartments supports a brick chimney. Chimneys have corbeled brick caps.

7. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: The south elevation has four single doorways and three double doorways. The single doorways have operable glass transoms and radiating brick voussiors. The double doorways have semi-circular glass transoms. The single doors are four panel. The double doors have a single glass light over two panels. In the east elevation there is a variety of doors. The doorway leading to the barbershop has a wide door with two glass side panels. Other doors are the same as the double doors in the south elevation. The Cafe, formerly the public bar, has two screened doors. Service doors in the west elevation have four horizontal panels. Doors from the first and second floor apartments on the north elevation have four lights over two panels. Doors from the second floor guest rooms opened onto the space which formerly was the balcony. Other doors in the north elevation, first and second floors, have a large panel over three panels.
- b. Windows: All windows except the second floor windows on the south and east elevations and the store windows are wood double hung, two-over-two. These windows have radiating brick voussiors and brick sills.

The second floor windows on the south and east have radiating brick voussiors and running labels of cut brick. Transoms of these windows are stained glass, 36"x18". Five designs are used. These designs use colored flat stained glass and clear faceted glass. Clear glass transoms are used on the 1925 addition. The windows are solid wood frames, two-over-two. These windows slide up as a panel behind the stained glass transoms and act both as a window and as a door onto the balcony.

There are five plate glass storefront windows on the south elevation and seven on the east. These windows are above a wooden panel and sill. Above this are semi-circular fixed glass transoms.

8. Roof: Built-up roofing on sloping flat roof.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

a. First floor: The first floor is divided into four bays by firewalls. There are two 6-room interconnected private flats on the west side of the building. These flats open off the arcade and the courtyard. To the east of these flats are a similar series of five rooms which might have been living quarters. They are entered by a corridor. A public restaurant and public bar occupy the front section of the building, with the kitchen and butler's pantry behind. The barbershop is located in the 1925 addition, which is north of the original building.

b. Second floor: On the west side of the second floor is an eight-room private flat with bathrooms. To the east are twelve private bedrooms. The section to the east of the latter consists of a billiard room, a reading room, a butler's pantry, four private dining rooms, a coat room, a rest room, a director's office, three card rooms, a linen room, and the Grand Salon (originally the private dining room).

2. Stairways: A broad stairway leads up from the arcade door to the second floor club lobby. There is an exterior stairway on the west elevation, in the courtyard area, and leads to a balcony. The 1925 addition includes an interior stairway.

3. Flooring: First floor is tile on concrete. Second floor is carpeted on hardwood. The bathroom floor is tile.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: The walls are plaster with decorative plaster panels with enriched plaster moldings over oak wainscot panels, chairrails and base. Ceilings are embossed tin.

5. Doors: Four panel wood.

6. Decorative features and trim: The fireplace on the north wall of the Grand Salon is in a projecting chimney breast. The opening is rectangular with a cast-iron "Cane" pattern architrave. Yellow glazed tile surrounds the architrave and is edged with another band of cast iron. Small colonettes with Ionic acanthus leaf capitals support the lower frieze, cornice and mantel shelf. The frieze consists of two patterns, each consisting of three rosettes tied together by a beaded oval and flanking a panel on which is an oval radiating sun pattern. The cornice consists of a row of dentils, a row of bead-and-reel,

and a row of vertical grooves. The entire mantelpiece is of wood. Above the mantel hangs a rectangular mirror with beveled edges surrounded by four successive rows of beads and a row of bead-and-reel. Above the mirror, supported by two larger colonettes with Ionic capitals, is another frieze, cornice and mantel shelf. The frieze contains five garland circles tied at the top with ribbons. The cornice is a row of dentils and a row of beads.

There is also a west fireplace in the Grand Salon. The fireplace has a rectangular opening with an egg-and-dart architrave. Brick or tile surrounds the architrave. Flanking the opening are the colonettes which support the frieze, cornice and mantel shelf. The colonettes have two different leaf designs and a rosette. The rosette is placed between the two leaves. The frieze consists of a large, ornate scroll-like design. Above this is an oval-shaped mirror. Another set of colonettes flank the mirror and support the cornice which has a decorative trim and a corner scroll-like design. The colonettes have tapering shafts supported on urn-like pedestals. They are more ornate than the lower colonettes.

The fireplace on the north wall of the Public Bar in the first floor has a rectangular opening with a carved wood architrave surrounded with ceramic tile. The frieze above the opening is carved in a ornate foliated scroll pattern. The two colonettes supporting the cornice and mantel shelf consist of two wooden urn-like columns resting on square bases. These columns support a square capital with foliated scrolls. The over-mantel consists of a square beveled mirror surrounded by four rows of beads and flanked on both sides by colonettes with Corinthian columns. The columns support a frieze containing two foliated scrolls and a cornice.

7. Mechanical equipment: Light fixtures were originally gas and were later converted to electricity.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The building faces south towards the Ybor Cigar Factory which is across East Ninth Avenue in Ybor City, Old Spanish Tampa. To the north, across an alley is the Cuban Club. To the east across Fourteenth Street are the new buildings of the Ybor City Campus of Hillsborough Community College.
2. Historic landscape design: The sidewalk under the arcade is made up of alternating strips of black and white colored concrete. The courtyard, located in the north side of the building, is overgrowth weeds.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Interviews:

Avellanal-Jiminez, Jose Luis, May 26, 1973

Dunn, Hampton, June 18, 1973

Leslie, Theodore, June 23, 1973

Pizzo, Tony, Local Historian, Tampa, Florida, June 16, 1973

B. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Title Records, Chelsea Title and Guaranty Company, Tampa, Florida

Tax Records, Hillsborough County Tax Assessors Office, Tampa, Florida

Smith, Milo and Associates. A Plan for Preserving Tampa's Latin Heritage. Prepared for Tampa City Demonstration Agency, Tampa, Florida

2. Secondary and published sources:

The Pan American Federation Brochure, Tampa, Florida. 1945

Newspaper articles:

The Tampa Times, May 2, 1954, p. 13

The Tampa Tribune, July 9, 1961, p. 3-D

The Tampa Tribune, March 29, 1967

The Tampa Morning Tribune, January 30, 1896

The Tampa Morning Tribune, March 11, 1896

The Tampa Morning Tribune, March 26, 1896

The Tampa Weekly Tribune, October 31, 1895

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Historic American Buildings Survey
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PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The project was made possible by the National Park Service, the Florida Bicentennial Commission and the City of Tampa. Under the direction of John Poppeliers, chief of HABS, the project was completed during the summer of 1973 at the HABS Field Office, Hillsborough Community College, Tampa, Florida, by Professor Donald W. Barnes, Jr. (Architect, North Carolina State University), Field Supervisor; L. Glenn Westfall (Hillsborough Community College), Historian; and four student architects: Steven E. Bauer (University of Kansas); Weldon E. Cunningham (University of Texas); Daniel L. Jacoby (Cornell University); and Amy Weinstein (University of Pennsylvania). The written documentation was edited in 1982 by Susan McCown, a HABS historian in the Washington, D. C. office, for transmittal to the Library of Congress. Walter Smalling, Jr. took the photographs in 1979.